



MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 36

SEPT. 9-15

THIS WEEK'S

HEADLINES

FLAIR SIGNS PACT WITH TITAN SPORTS

STAMFORD CT---Seven-time NWA/WCW world champion Ric Flair officially signed a contract with Titan Sports last Thursday.

The pact, for an undisclosed figure, is believed to be a standard two-year Titan deal.

Flair was rushed into a guest shot taping of PRIME TIME WRESTLING Thursday night. The program aired Monday Night on USA Network. Flair's first match against Hulk Hogan is tentatively set Oct. 25 in Oakland.

LUCHA TV DEAL SPELLS UNION TROUBLE

MEXICO CITY---Mexican newspapers are reporting a wrestling labor upheaval, triggered by the signing of the first prime time TV contract by a Lucha Libre promotion.

EMLL, larger of the two primary Lucha groups, has signed a deal with the top Mexico City-based network for weekly airings from 5:30-7:30 p.m. EMLL airings on the U.S.-based Galavision network are only available to a small number of Mexican homes.

As a result, Manny Guzman, head of the Syndicate of Wrestlers and Referees of the Mexican Republic---a wrestlers' union---has called for a boycott by grapplers and referees of all cards in the country. The strike was called on the verge of EMLL's major card of the year, which went on as scheduled Friday night and aired Sunday on Galavision.

EMLL controls approximately 200 wrestlers while the number two Lucha group, UWA, promotes an estimated 100. Wire dispatches indicate Guzman has succeeded in organizing the strike for most non-EMLL cards.

American Lucha analyst Steve Sims says, "What the TV deal does is place Mexico in the first step toward what we've seen in the U.S. since 1984. The union leaders are afraid a major TV deal will eventually kill off the many small-town shows which currently make lots of money without a TV base and keep hundreds of people employed."

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MATWATCH Extra

A LOOK AT US, PART II

My high school journalism teacher, Elaine Thomas Stephens drilled into us early in 1969 a line which would make the All-Cliche Team today: "The pen is mightier than the sword." Only Elaine added, "Just be careful how you use the pen."



Steve

Beverly

As I attempted to relate last week in a proofreading-botched paragraph (see CORRECTION, page 4), it is the view from here that we, as wrestling journalists, are not always as careful as we should be about how we use that pen, in some cases because of a desire for ambiguity. We want all the access to wrestling figures and openness in coverage, yet we are often quick to write off errors and inaccuracies as trivial because the publication is "just a newsletter."

How some both in and out of the industry look at us is worth a reflection. Former WORLD WIDE WRESTLING host Chris Cruise, who is about to start his own periodical (IN THE NEWS), is also a law student and has some pointed views on underground wrestling media. "Talk about problems in wrestling journalism, I'm concerned about those who just plagiarize Dave Meltzer," says Cruise. "Wrestling journalism has unfortunately---and we're not just talking about sheets, we're talking about rumors spread over the telephone, in person, it's become almost unimportant to check the facts any more. We just had a big report in all the sheets about The Ultimate Warrior signing a \$1 million contract and then, come to find out, he's booted out of the dressing room at SUMMER SLAM. Where do all of these things come from?"

Global Wrestling Federation president Joe Pedicino has been a newsletter subscriber for years. He has a mixed view of bulletins. "The positive: the good newsletters give fans the opportunity to find out more about the sport and get more involved, which is certainly not bad," says Pedicino. "But overwhelmingly, newsletter writers show little concern about whether what they write is true. Being first is more or being in the same week with everybody else is more important than the truth. There's something wrong with the mentality that says, 'Oh, if three people told me about it, it's true.' That's fine if the three people are credible but they often are not."

Veteran Georgia columnist Richard Hyatt has read MATWATCH from its inception. He's offered many constructive insights. A couple of years ago, he told me, "The biggest problem I see in doing a newsletter is you're like a one-man newspaper and handling such a volume of information is going to cause some mistakes to filter through. It's not like you're on a city desk of a paper and have a dozen writers and several editors to check everything."

One well-known wrestling insider, whose job would be jeopardized if named, says many bulletin writers are too idealistic. "I find it interesting and sometimes amusing to read some of these fantasy bookings. Some of them are pretty good," says the insider. "If people like to read them, that's fine. What irritates me is when these so-called experts start ripping us to shreds because we don't do everything like their so-called ideal scenarios call for. They don't understand the kind of internal politics, egos and sometimes contractual clauses you have to go through that makes it next to impossible."

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LUCHA (Cont. from Page 1)

Sims continued: "What you have to realize is the labor and economic system in Mexico is very different from ours. It's very centralized and in the case of a union, you have a committee or individual who speaks and everyone is expected to follow."

Another element in the Mexican situation is the recent importation of WWF SUPERSTARS OF WRESTLING for the country's one cable network, which still serves only a small percentage of the populous, since poor income levels limit cable penetration.

"There is a genuine fear for the future of the small shows, which have been doing great business without TV," says Sims. "The union leadership believes once people are exposed to the top-ranked promotion on free TV, they'll eventually drift away from the small promotions, just like has happened in the United States and Japan."

ROSS TO HOST WCW KTVT SHOW

ATLANTA---Jim Ross has been named host of the new PRO WRESTLING TEXAS show for WCW on Dallas/Ft. Worth-based KTVT.

The show, which premieres later this month, will be tailored for the superstation which has strong cable penetration in the Southwest and middle U.S. and is available to dish owners.

PWT will be the sixth weekly show for which Ross is emcee.

CHAMBER TEAMS TOLD FOR HALLOWEEN HAVOC

ATLANTA---Despite mysteries over the format, teams have been named for the Chamber of Horrors match at the Oct. 27 HALLOWEEN HAVOC in Chattanooga.

According to advertising material to be distributed this week to cable systems, Sting, the Steiner Brothers and El Gigante are listed as taking on One-Man Gang, Oz, Diamond Stud and Barry Windham.

Scott Steiner is still considered doubtful, pending his recovery from a torn bicep muscle.

Pre-show hype will likely involve a mystery over why the recently face-turned Windham is part of the heel team.

WCW insiders have issued denials this week that a Hunchbacks team was ever booked (see MATWATCHING). Still expected on the pay-per-view are Patriots vs. Enforcers, a Steve Austin-Dustin Rhodes TV title match, Cactus Jack vs. Bill Kazmaier and a Brian Pillman-Richard Morton light heavyweight title match.

STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 1)

Pedicino concurs. "A few weeks before we started Global, I was called by a few newsletter editors, including some I'd never heard of," says Pedicino. "It was, 'Gee, Joe, we're glad you're getting started. Wrestling needs you.' That kind of stuff. I told a couple of them, 'Yeah, and I bet three weeks after we're up and going, you'll be ripping us because we won't do things the way you think we should. Sure enough, they did. I welcome their opinions. We're not always right. But where is it written that the newsletter writer is always right? They have no idea what you go through behind-the-scenes, how to live with a budget or what it takes just to produce one TV show."

In March, Clay Bailey of THE (Memphis) COMMERCIAL APPEAL wrote: "Some contend the writers are part of the reason wrestling is dying; others compare them to supermarket tabloids." In the same piece, Jim Cornette said, "Some of the guys read them often; some read them and won't admit it and others don't care about them at all. It may depend on whether they get complimented or knocked. I view them as being like sports columnists who criticize a game."

From another insider, who has asked to remain anonymous: "It seems that since July, it's been the obsession of many newsletter editors and readers to get Jim Herd's hide, no matter the cost. Whether you like Herd or don't---and he's made many, many mistakes---I ask myself what purpose it serves when I see people refer to Herd as 'Old Pizaface.' What kind of journalism is that?"

Bob Islar, who edits a widely-read Southeastern-based football recruiting newsletter, says he encounters similar perils to wrestling bulletin editors: "The coaches, especially some college coaches, hate us. A lot of what we write comes from correspondents who monitor the progress of high school kids and which colleges are courting them. In the South, it's like a religion to follow this. But one coach told me I had hurt him with his fans because he didn't get a recruit we predicted he had in the bag. We're right much more than we're wrong but they only remember the times we're wrong."

Cruise focuses on an issue raised last week---age. While I reminded Chris age is no guarantee against mistakes, he said: "I know this is really gonna upset a lot of people, Steve. But you've got kids, teenagers, 23, 24, 25-year olds, either in college or just out of college who really aren't trained journalists, who don't say, 'Well, look, that's a rumor. Should I check it out first?' I guess they're looking at competition. They really want their sheet to be known and they want to be liked and respected in the wrestling business. They come out with totally unverifiable stuff that's more wrong than right. Anybody who criticizes that kind of journalism is totally justified."

Radio journalist Mike Allen of Vicksburg MS, an avid newsletter reader, agrees: "I love the sheets. They're entertaining. But I sometimes ask where is the editing process. Particularly in some of these letters to the editor segments where you read some absolutely tasteless personal attacks."

One of my most serious concerns is my perception of a quasi-bandwagon view that we are not doing our jobs if we aren't perpetually critical. Some of my most critical mail has come when I have praised someone in a column. In this is a critique of CLASH XVI. The rating wasn't great. The total homes figure wasn't bad. It is strictly one man's view, no more, no less. I offer my perceived good and bad elements of the show. But if my phone responses are a barometer, I'll be ripped because I didn't trash it as the worst of all time. Says Pedicino: "There are a lot of readers who think it's the job of the newsletter to only write about what we're doing wrong. Unfortunately, I believe the fans have been taught to believe that by some writers. Can you imagine a stock and investment newsletter that only advises you on the things you shouldn't do or buy?" Offers Cruise: "I think any good publication is a reflection of its readers. My belief is that Vince McMahon is an excellent play-by-play man, as good as Jim Ross, possibly better. But if you ever put that in a publication as a newsletter editor, you would be laughed out of town or out of business. If you print anything positive, you're accused of being Pollyanna-ish, like you've been plagued by the organization." My first newspaper mentor, Paul Robinson, says: "I've made many enemies by some stands I have taken but I don't apologize at all for giving a boost to the young athlete who may gain an ounce of confidence by a kind word in print."

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Worst CLASH Ratings Ever

THE AUGUSTA STORY

It will not go down as the most memorable evening in TBS wrestling history---at least if the ratings are a barometer.

CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS XVI: FALL BRAWL scored the lowest ratings in the history of the series. The Augusta GA special drew a 3.7 rating and 5.9 per cent share of audience for its two-and-a-half-hour Thursday night slot, which fell below the 3.8 rating of the 1989 GUTS AND GLORY. The 5.9% share was only one-tenth above the 5.8 all-time low for DIXIE DYNAMITE this past February.

CLASH: THE BOTTOM FIVE

COASTAL CRUSH (June 1990), 4.1/7.5
(2.23 million).
DIXIE DYNAMITE (Feb. 1991), 3.9/5.8
(2.16 million).
KNOCKSVILLE, U.S.A. (June 1991),
3.9/6.7 (2.22 million).
GUTS & GLORY (June 1989), 3.8/6.6
(1.9 million).
FALL BRAWL (Sept. 1991), 3.7/5.9
(2.1 million).

The 3.7, however, was within the forecast of MATWATCH and some TBS programmers concerned the show would average as low as a 3.5.

On the plus side, CLASH XVI was seen in 2.1 million homes without a Ric Flair main event, a still solid core audience larger than GUTS & GLORY, SEASON'S BEATINGS (CLASH IV), equal to RAGIN' CAJUN CLASH and just below CLASH V in February 1989.

Quarter-hour ratings were not available at deadline. What will be interesting is if the ratings peaked in the middle near the Sting-Cactus Jack

angles, rather than with the weak world tag team title finale, the worst top-liner ever for a CLASH. From a creative standpoint, weaknesses were evident. Putting Bill Kazmaier in the main event was a glaring error, even with the old weight-attack angle at mid-show. When your finisher only goes 3:36, one has little crescendo. When the best buildup for FALL BRAWL was on THE JIM ROSS SHOW on Atlanta radio last week, clearly the show was in trouble. Not enough specific was listed in pre-show promotion to lure viewers, as opposed to past CLASHes. Even TV GUIDE ads billed a 10-man battle royal, rather than a 15.

From an action standpoint, this show peaked at the 9-9:15 quarter hour and without single matches to feature a Barry Windham or Bobby Eaton, there simply wasn't enough quality. A personal view is WCW would be better versed to cut back to seven events on a 2 1/2-hour show and allow quality workers more time.

The Brian Pillman-Bradstreet match was by far the fastest-paced and best-worked match. The crowd was enthusiastic and it should send a plain message the light heavyweight category has potential, if developed. If there was a star of the show (other than the rock-solid Jim Ross and Tony Schiavone, who kept enthusiastic and well-paced without oversell, doing their best with the table of goods set), it was Mick Foley as Cactus Jack, who worked and sold his can off during two exchanges with Sting, even if the second angle was predictable. Cactus has major star written all over him, if properly showcased.

From a production standpoint, the lighting was excellent and, in particular, the Sting ring entrance was electrifying. The skycam was not overused and was at its most effective during the battle royal. The closeups of some of the Cactus bumps were breathtaking. Missed shot: the original emergence of Cactus from the package, which had to be shown in replay.

Nice touches: humanizing Ron Simmons in features with a youth group and bringing them by bus to The Omni. Ron has potential breakthrough star potential who can eventually lay the words "first black" to rest. The breaking down of the Luger dressing room door was well-shot. Disappointing in the press conference routine was Luger's offer of Simmons to be his "driver," an unnecessary racial hint, which I am told will be the only one of its kind.

Paul E. Dangerously was wasted simply in two ring segments and, from this vantage, would be more valuable as a third man in the booth to add counterpoint to Ross and Schiavone. Nothing personal against Eric Bischoff, because I don't know him, but his style comes across cocky and artificial and Schiavone would have been superior in getting the contract signing sequence over.

In short, with the menu offered and the turmoil WCW has faced this summer, the rating was no worse than expected and 2.1 million homes downright stellar, considering network competition. One WCW insider has phrased BRAWL "a good, mediocre show" which should be "the standard for our Saturday night show."

SEPT. CLASH MAIN EVENTS

Sting vs. Black Scorpion and Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger (1990, tie), 6.8/11.4 (3.8 million homes).

Sting vs. Barry Windham (1988), 6.2/10.5 (2.88 million).

Ric Flair/Sting vs. Great Muta/Dick Slater (1989), 5.8/9.1 (3 million).

Rick Steiner/Bill Kazmaier vs. Arn Anderson/Larry Zbyszko (1991), ??????

MATWATCH 25 SCALE

CROWD ENTHUSIASM.....3.5
ANNOUNCING.....4.5
QUALITY OF MATCHES.....2.0
TOTAL PRODUCTION.....3.8
OVERALL SHOW EXCELLENCE.....2.4

TOTAL RATING.....16.2

CORRECTION

(ED. NOTE:

Because of a proofreading error, MATWATCH contained several errors in the final paragraph of Steve Beverly's column on page 2 in last week's issue. The column should have read as follows):

But the attack issue relates to a growing number of one-on-one interviews in bulletins. I run them, as do many of my colleagues. But when I read those in which a wrestler or another individual makes an inflammatory remark about someone and I don't see any evidence of an effort to give the attacked party a chance to respond (and I have talked to a few "attacked" still waiting on a phone call), I wonder if the editor thinks it's okay because it's "just a newsletter."

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

As you are likely aware, MATWATCH will suspend weekly publication Jan. 27, 1992. On page 8 of this issue is a price list for closeout subscriptions, according to your current expiration.

Renewals are, through Oct. 25, also available at the following lengths and prices:

(U.S./CANADA) \$6 for 5 issues, \$12 for 11.
(OVERSEAS) \$9 for 5 issues, \$18 for 11.

(GIFT OFFER) Through Oct. 1, gift subscriptions may be made to persons other than yourself of 6 issues for \$3. You receive a bonus of 2 issues for each gift set. Please print addresses clearly.

CHECK, CASH or MONEY ORDER to: MATWATCH,
16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

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YOU SAID IT!!!

I once heard you say on John Arezzi's radio program you felt one day someone would attempt to sue a newsletter. As one who has been with you for three years, the Jim Herd quote has to be the most ridiculous grounds for Dennis Guthrie to implicate you. Surely Guthrie must know how your readers regard this situation. Hang in there!

BOB ARMUCHEE
BRONX NY

(By Phone): I was very saddened to see the PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT from you. I understand that you don't have a lawyer but I think you backed down, I don't want to say unnecessarily but I was saddened to see this kind of pressure exerted because you clearly attributed your information. I was sad that an attorney who presumably stands for upholding the Constitution would unnecessarily challenge somebody for exercising his or her right under the First Amendment.

CHRISTOPHER CRUISE
PORTLAND ME

Your apology to Ric Flair was a poor excuse for reporting. I think the First Amendment would also apply to wrestling newsletters. If Jim Herd thinks Ric Flair is a dishonest person, he certainly has the right to express himself and you the right to report it without fear of some lawyer threatening you to restrict your reporting: a good example of why lawyers have such a poor rep.

JIM RUSSELL
ORLANDO FL

(PSB: You're right, Jim. It was one of the poorest excuses of reporting in my career and I'm not proud of it. As one who has testified before a Georgia Senate committee on the Sunshine Law and for a regional Radio-Television News Directors Association panel on the First Amendment---in Guthrie's own state of North Carolina---I feel I've disgraced my entire profession. But, as I earlier wrote, my colleague, Richard Hyatt, and two others in the mainline media I consulted said without the legal resources of a media corporation, it would likely be too costly to fight it. Neither pro wrestling nor Ric Flair are worth the financial or, more importantly, emotional strains, considering the summer I've had.)

When we lose your publication in January, we will be losing a major part of our lives because you put so much of yours in to MATWATCH. This whole episode surrounding Jim Herd, Ric Flair and his lawyer has almost made me embarrassed to say I'm a wrestling fan. I hope you know you have our support. But perhaps I can understand now why you want to get out of this. To put up with such childish behavior when you were trying to display the ultimate responsibility of a journalist---fairness---has only succeeded in creating more headaches. I wish you were the kind who would tell them all to take it and shove it in the boldest of terms. They all deserve it.

TOM CLAIBORNE
PROVIDENCE RI

Jim Ross took a shot at people who write letters to the editors about TSN (Canada's) POWER HOUR being out of date. Guess that's me, huh? I was told in Baltimore that the intros for TSN are totally uncensored. I believe it!

JEFF ZINGER
WOODSTOCK ONT CANADA

I really don't know what the answer is (for WCW). Bringing back Jim Cornette and the influence of Bill Watts would help. But even then, I don't know if every problem would be able to be fixed. I do know that Luger as champ is not going to work. He doesn't have the TV camera charisma or the ring talent to sustain a long reign as titleholder. Scott Steiner is the only wrestler in WCW right now that I think would be a great successor to the Flair years. It would mean breaking up one of the best tag team combos of all time but Steiner has the talent to be a tremendous singles champ.

STEVE HADDER
MANASSAS PARK VA

There aren't many real diehard fans any more. I feel it's because of stupid gimmicks, poor matchmakers and the Hollywood side of wrestling. Even with Vince McMahon's Disney-type wrestling, I must say I enjoy it more than any other league.

ALAN KONLANDE
WANTAGH NY

When I first moved here from Chapel Hill NC in the middle 1970s, I thought the pro wrestling around Philadelphia was tame compared to Dorton Arena. With the advent of the Tri-State Wrestling Alliance (Joel Goodhart's group), this seems to be the area where the wrestling action is going great guns today---the proof is in the ring and anywhere in the building.

PROF. DOUGLAS STALKER
NEWARK DE

Considering the lengths so many "smart" fans, sheets and wrestlers go to knock wrestling, I recently felt compelled to acknowledge someone in the business for what I consider a true display of class, usually unaccustomed to wrestling.

On June 28 at a TV taping for GWF, I sustained a broken arm during a match with Terry Garvin. Needless to say, my alias for the evening (Zebra Kid) is not a drawing card and has not been missed, but Joe Pedicino's handling of the situation deserves acknowledgement among the wrestling community.

My medical bills were almost triple what I was to be paid for my match. They were promptly paid without question. As a journeyman jobber/referee for 11 years, I have seen many promoters scoff at similar requests. My sincere thanks goes to Joe for his class handling of an unfortunate situation. Hopefully, he will be able to bring back that same respect to the business I love.

LARRY DWYER
ARLINGTON TX

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VIDIOTS

Sept. 3-8

(TBS/CLASH XVI) - [15-MAN BATTLE ROYAL]: El Gigante wins by clotheslining Oz/One-Man Gang out (9:29); (WCW LT. HWT. SEMIFINALS): 1. Brian Pillman d. Bradstreet (6:52). 2. Richard Morton d. Mike Graham w. trunks (7:37); Sting d. Johnny B. Badd (6:12) but Cactus Jack bursts from package to attack Sting, hipbusters him off 2nd turnbuckle; (ANGLE) Bill Kazmaier tries steelbending record when Arn Anderson/Larry Zbyszko ambush him w. weights; Freebirds d. Patriots (6:47); (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. Cactus. 2nd box arrives. Cactus goes to "hug Abdullah," Sting emerges from box and pummels Jack; Ron Simmons d. Diamond Stud (2:27); (DZ) Simmons-Harley Race-Curtis Hughes argue; Van Hammer d. Terry Taylor (1:11); (ANGLE) Simmons bursts in Luger's locker room during Missy Hyatt interview but is ejected. But Ron bursts door down, brawl erupts; (WCW TV TITLE) Steve Austin d. Tom Zenk (9:15) w. knucks from Jeannie Clarke; (ANGLE) At contract signing, Lex says he has job for Ron as "driver" when he loses. Ron sails into Luger & brawl erupts. Lex rushes away in limo; (WCW WORLD TAG FINALS) Enforcers d. Rick Steiner/Kazmaier (3:36) to win belts. DRAW.

(SOUTH ATLANTIC) - Willie Clay d. John Sullivan; Chris Chavis d. Unknown Warrior; (8/11) Vince Torelli d. Phil McLoughlin; (8/11) Wahoo McDaniel D. Rick Savage; (8/18) Nazi Stormtroopers d. Tyrone Knox/Jimmy Johnson; (8/18) Rob Zakowski draw vs. Ricky Nelson. BOMB-PLUS.

(MEMPHIS CABLE CHAMPIONSHIP) - Snowman/Kenny D. no contest vs. Tommy Lane/Lou Winston when building-length brawl erupts; Odell Buckingham d. J.D. McKay. NO RATING.

(LPWA) - [RERUN]: Medusa Miceli d. Allison Royal; Malaya Hosaka d. Magnificent Mimi by DQ. Bambi saves Malaya after; Lady X d. The Beast; (ANGLE) During interview, Reggie Bennett decks Lady X & brawl erupts; Comrade Orga/LaGata d. Susan Sexton/Alma Almarez when Susan leaves; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Misty Blue Simmes/Heidi Lee Morgan on splitup & the 2 brawl; Terri Power draw vs. Denise Storm. NO RATING.

(GLOBAL) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: {NORTH AMERICAN FINALS} Patriot d. Al Perez in disputed finish; (SEGMENT) Patriot gives belt back because of foulup; Steven Dane d. Action Jackson; (NEWSROOM) Joe Pedicino on N.A. situation, Sting; (SEG) Skandor Akbar denies he's The Boss; Lightning Kid d. Rick Garren; Chris Walker/Steve Simpson d. Outlaws; M. Singh d. Scorpio; PYTs d. Terry Garvin/Chaz when Chris Love bops Chaz w. loaded fan; Lightning Kid d. Rick Garren; John Tatum/Rod Price d. Gary Young/Jeff Gaylord when Ak holds Young's leg. RESTHOLD-PLUS.
[MAIN EVENTS]: Eddie Gilbert d. Steve Cox; M. Singh d. Gaylord; Garvin d. Ken Stryker; Terry Daniels d. Scorpio; Perez d. Mike Davis; Walker/Simpson d. Bill Irwin/Sweet Daddy Falcone. NO RATING.

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Tue./N.A. SEMIFINALS]: Terry Gordy d. Cactus Jack by countout; Patriot d. Stan Lane when Patriot rams Lane into Cornette's racket; Perez d. Austin Idol using blackjack from Bad News; (NEWSROOM) Joe on CompuServ/Prodigy wrestling exchanges. DRAW-PLUS.

[Wed.]: {COIN TOSS} Patriot gets bye for N.A. finals; (FLASHBACK) Patriot d. Soultaker; (NEWSROOM) Pedicino on N.A. finals; (N.A. PLAYOFF) Perez d. Gordy by DQ when Terry shoves ref aside; (N.A. CHAMPIONSHIP) Patriot d. Perez to win belt but Al clearly has feet entangled in ropes. RESTHOLD.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - John Michaels d. Intruder; Scott Anthony d. Mike Roberts; (GLOBAL) Gordy d. Cactus Jack by countout; (CLASSIC/UWF) One-Man Gang vs. Savannah Jack no contest for brawl; Chic & Rick Donovan d. Eddie Sweat/Moose Mahoney; (INTL/TOKYO) Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Antonio Inoki (Part 1); Brute Force d. Damien/Mason. RESTHOLD.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Big Bossman d. Scott Colantino; (CLIP) Randy-Liz reception. Liz opens gift with "cobra" inside. Undertaker bashes Randy on head w. urn. Sid Justice saves Liz from snakebite w. chair; (SUPERSTARS/FUNERAL PARLOR) Roddy Piper shoves aside Ric Flair's belt & spits on Bobby Heenan; Greg Valentine d. Bob Bradley; Col. Mustafa d. Bill Pierce; Natural Disasters d. Phil Apollo/Paul Perez; Ricky Steamboat d. Brian Donahue; I.R.S. d. Ross Greenberg; (BARBER SHOP) Brutus Beefcake w. Ted DiBiase/Sherri. RESTHOLD.
[SUPERSTARS]: (CLIP) Randy-Liz reception; Skinner d. Scott Summers; (UPDATE) Piper-Heenan-Flair's belt FUNERAL PARLOR angle; Virgil d. Wayne Duffy; Bushwhackers d. Dwayne Gill/Barry Hardy; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Paul Bearer w. I.R. Schyster; (SUMMER SLAM CLIP/I-C TITLE) Bret Hart d. Curt Hennig to win belt; Warlord d. Mark Thomas; Other winner: Berserker. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - (1982) Nick Bockwinkel d. Tito Santana; (1984) Road Warriors d. Fabulous Ones by DQ; (1983) Adrian Adonis d. Jim Brunzell. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(IWCCW) - Robbie Ellis d. Ga. Guerrilla; Tony Atlas d. Zip; (CLASSIC/CARRIBEAN TITLE) Tyree Pride d. Ninja. DOUBLE BOMB.

(AAWF) - Bullet/Scott Armstrong d. Todd & Steve Zane; Bambi d. Lady X by DQ when Ronald P. Gossett IV runs in. DOUBLE BOMB.

(USWA/WMC) - [MID-SOUTH COL./USWA "WORLD" TITLE]: Jerry Lawler d. Dragonmaster to regain belt; (MSC) Jimmy Valiant/Sweet Georgia Brown d. Tom Prichard/Miss Texas when Eric Embry hits Prichard with TX flag. Prichard/Embry argue after; (STUDIO) Chris Frazier d. Embry by DQ when Embry keeps bashing Chris w. chair outside. Tony Anthony tries to save but is ambushed by P.Y. Chu Hi/Embry until Bill Dundee/Rockin' Randy save; PYTs d. Randy/Freezer Thompson; (MSC) Bruiser/Awesome Kong d. Koko B. Ware/Robert Fuller when Reggie B. Fine hits Fuller w. cane; (ANGLE) Ronald P. Gossett IV introed as new manager for Jeff Jarrett/Fuller. Gossett/Chris Love go nose-to-nose. Gossett decks Love but is ambushed by PYTs until Jeff/Robert save. Faces rally & Ronnie big splashes Eric Fontaine; (MSC/LT. HWT. TITLE) Danny Davis d. Dundee to regain belt when Bull Pain decks Bill w. glove; (ANGLE) Billy Joe Travis does worst job of singing in TV history; Lawler/Valiant d. Pain/Travis by DQ when Travis bashes Jimmy in head w. guitar. DRAW.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Big Charlie Steele d. Rock & Roll Warrior; (NEWS SEG) Tommy Rogers d. Lou Perez to win Suncoast Southern belt; (LUMBERJACK MATCH) Boris Malenko/Frankie Reyes d. Penelope Paradise/Superstar. NO RATING.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Oz d. Scott Sandlin; Patriots d. Chris Sullivan/Steve Estes; (LT. HWT. TITLE) Morton d. Johnny Rich; Simmons d. Russell Sapp; (REPLAY) Original Luger/Race/Hughes attacks on Simmons/Barry Windham; (MISSY DOES MAIL) Abdullah the Butcher attacks Sting; P.N. News d. One-Man Gang by countout but OMG plops two 747s on P.N.N. after. RESTHOLD.

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[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: {U.S. TAG TEAM TITLE} Patriots d. Freebirds to win belts; Stud d. Kenny Kendahl; (CONTROL CENTER/WCW WORLD TITLE/OMNI) Luger d. Simmons to keep belt when Lex pile-drives Ron on chair during ref bump. Barry Windham tries to tell ref & is ambushed by Race/Hughes to juice; (CLASH) Simmons-Luger angles; Zenk d. Rick Jones (Doug Gilbert); Oz d. Jamie McKinnon; Kevin Sullivan d. Lynn Fields; Enforcers d. Sandlin/John Douglas; Windham d. Snake Watson by DQ when Race/Hughes/Lex run in & Lex ambushes Barry. Simmons, 4 jobbers try to save & Hughes finally flees; (CLASH XVI) Cactus Jack-Sting angles; Sting d. Tim Frye; (DANGER ZONE) Blonde in gift box for Sting with cryptic message. She kisses him. Sting fires barb at Cactus Jack/Abdullah, kisses woman, who leaves; Badd d. Chris Sullivan; P.N.N. d. Lou Fabiano. RESTHOLD-PLUS. [MAIN EVENT]: {WCW 6-MAN TITLE} Zenk/Josh/Rhodes d. Freebirds/Bradstreet; (DANGER ZONE I) Cactus Jack tosses cigars to Paul E. & the crew; Cactus d. Sandlin; (DZ II) Sting/box angles; Rhodes d. Porkchop Cash; (REPLAY) Windham's face rubbed in floor; Enforcers d. Hardliners. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: Zenk d. Frye; (WNN) Gordon Solie w. WCW Windham-Watson match & Luger rubbing Barry's face on floor; Stud d. Johnny Meadows; Kazmaier d. Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker; Freebirds d. Larry Santo/McKinnon; (WCW TV TITLE) Dustin Rhodes d. Austin (who retains belt) by DQ when Steve tosses Dustin over top. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD WIDE]: {6-MAN} Rhodes/Big Josh/Zenk d. Morton/Thomas Rich/Taylor by DQ when Morton hits Josh w. computer; (WNN) Same as WCW PRO; Patriots d. Watson/Sam Cody; Rick Steiner d. Joel Savage; (DANGER ZONE) Sting greeted by girl in box; Stud d. Chris Sullivan. RESTHOLD.

(GRUDGE MATCH) - Erik (E.T.) Terry d. Michael Delaney; Marie Varicchio d. Rob Easterla; Ted (The Flasher) Kamba d. Bully Boy Jerry House. POWERSLAM.

(IWF) - This Masked Guy (who unmask as Lou Perez) d. Cliff Anderson. Masked guy; Long Riders d. Joe Bruce/Tom Sawyer; Thunder & Lightning d. Purple Terror/Nuclear Assassin I; Thor d. Dennis Allen; Heartbreakers d. Mike Dibacco/Sonny T; Mondo Kleen d. John Boyd. RESTHOLD.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - [MEXICAN NATL. LT. HWT. TITLE]: Mascara Sagrada d. Pirata Morgan to retain belt; (6-man) Anibal/Lizmark/Rayo de Jalisco Jr. d. Nitron/Mascara 2000/Universo 2000 2 st. falls; (TRIPLE HAIR MATCH) 1. Perro Aguayo d. Konnan. 2. Cien Caras d. Aguayo. 3. Konnan d. Aguayo when Caras trips Aguayo & he crotches. Perro loses hair for 2 losses. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Paul E. Dangerously, PRO WRESTLING N.Y.: "When you get up there in age, and you're getting close to it, Jimbo, you become like a ballplayer at an old-timers game. You cling to your past or any symbol of it. Like a championship belt. You know, 'I'm the heavyweight champion of the world, brother...WOOOOO!" 2. Steven DeTruth, PW'91, on Festus: "Call the narcotic squad! 235 pounds of dope just walked into the ring." 3. DeTruth, PW'91: "Hudson, your commentary is like a dice game---a lot of crap." 4. DeTruth, PW'91: "It's great to be here in Darwin's waiting room: Canton GA!" 5. Jim Ross/Paul E., WCW: (JR) "Sullivan is like a whirling dervish." (PED) "That sounds like a dish you'd eat in Dothan,

Alabama---a whirling dervish." 6. Ronald P. Gossett IV, WMC, on Chris Love: "You are the biggest nothing since the invention of the zero." 7. Love, WMC, on Gossett: "He got caught in the arches trying to leave McDonald's." 8. Dave Brown, WMC, on Billy Joe Travis: "He's a bad version of MTV!" 9. Jesse Ventura, GRUDGE MATCH: "Great thing about the GRUDGE MATCH ring: there's always room for Jell-O." 10. Scott Anthony/DeTruth, PW'91, on Dustin Rhodes-clone Dustin Taylor: (SA) "Just can't figure out who Taylor looks like." (SD) "I got it! James Taylor!" (SA) "No, I got it! James Brown!"

11. Gossett, WMC: "Bring on your PYTs, your FATs or whatever they are." 12. Jim Cornette, LPWA: "Comrade Orga is from Vladivostok. Moscow's just a catch-all term for Russia." 13. Ross, CLASH XVI, on Taylor/Ranger Ross/Josh going out of battle royal together: "That's a trifecta." 14. Ross, WCW, on Luger/Race/Hughes attack on Barry: "Look at the bodies! It's like a wreck on I-85." 15. Ross, CLASH, on Sting: "He's got a washboard-like abdomen." 16. Anthony, GLOBAL, on Patriot: "His real name's Vladimir Badenov. He's a Russian spy." 17. Ross, WCW, on P.N. News' orange outfit: "He looks kinda like the Citrus Bowl." 18. Cornette, LPWA: "These girls know a lot about clotheslines. They've hung out a lot of wash to-night." 19. Hudson/Craig Johnson, GLOBAL, on Outlaws: (SH) "I don't think they're the original Outlaws---Dusty Rhodes and Dick Murdoch." (CJ) "As another announcer in this illustrious sport would say, 'Highly unlikely.'" 20. Bobby Heenan/Gorilla Monsoon, WC: (BH) "What's the definition of eerie?" (GM) "Scary." (BH) "They sure named this town right."

21. Heenan, WC, on Skinner: "His brother's quite a musician. He played the guitar in the movie DELIVERANCE." 22. Roddy Piper, SOW, on Dwayne Gill/Barry Hardy: "They're the only guys to ever make the Bushwhackers look attractive." 23. Piper, SOW, on Paul Bearer: "That's Eddie Munster's father." 24. Ross/Paul E., JIM ROSS SHOW: (PE) "I'm gaining weight." (JR) "You're not on steroids, are you?"

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Cliff; caller, JRS: "If Jim Herd is still there when his contract expires, then some-body ought to fire Jack Petrik." (JR) "Thank you for your comments, even if we don't agree with all of them." 2. Arn Anderson, CLASH: "We return these (world tag) belts not to rock stars, not to rappers but to two plain ol' journeymen wrestlers."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Ross, CLASH, on Gary Cappetta's gyrations to J.B. Badd's music: "Is Cappetta dancing or bouncing?" 2. Ross/Paul E., PWN: (JR) "When are you gonna drop that ridiculous imitation?" (PE) "Whenever someone drops their ridiculous claim to be heavyweight champion of the world." 4. Ross, PH: "Do you think (Kevin) Sullivan ever had a Cousin Itt?" 5. Heenan, WC, on Bossman: "Is that sweat on his shirt or did he spill a bowl of soup?" 6. Ventura, GM, to pie-faced Michael Delaney: "Is any girl worth this?"

OFF-BROADCAST LINE - George Evans, Atlanta: "Ted Turner's trying to buy Hanna-Barbera. Does that mean Huckleberry Hound, Yogi Bear, Boo Boo and Quick Draw McGraw are gonna be The Four Horsemen? Think about it."

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. DAVIS-TATER (Johnson on Davis Bros. finishing hold). 2. LADYBUG (Gossett on Love). 3. MUS-IC CITY MAN (Billy Travis on self). 4. MR. & MRS. MACHO (Mean Gene on Randy/Liz). 5. TEDDY BEAR (Sherri Martel on DiBiase).

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Lex Luger, CLASH XVI: "...credit where credit's due." 2. Tony Schiavone, CLASH XVI: "...take the bull-by the horns." 3. Jeff Jarrett, WMC: "...fight fire (Continued on Page 8)

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RATINGS RAP

NO ANGLE: If early reports from WWF quarters are indicative, there will be no hot confrontation angle between Ric Flair and Hulk Hogan before their October matches begin. Flair was expected to deck Roddy Piper on one of the two Titan tapings earlier this week in Canada.

THEY SAID IT: Saturday's edition of PRO WRESTLING NEW YORK, the next-to-last on WPIX, featured the most feverish mockery of Flair, the belt, the championship status, etc., by Paul E. and straight man Ross. I'm told this week's episode will probably tone down and be the last mention of the situation but don't bet on it.

DENYING AGAIN: WCW people are now denying there was any plan to feature a Hunchbacks tag team at HALLOWEEN HAVOC or a Sting-One Man Gang U.S. title match---that the whole thing was a plant to fool the sheets. If so, why did some TBS people on Techwood Drive receive preliminary cards with those on it? Were they trying to fool them, too?

AHEAD ON TV: Up ahead on WCW will be a Cactus Jack-Tom Zenk match. Further, we're told there will be no quasi-racial insults to Ron Simmons again by Lex Luger. One insider told MATWATCH, "We debated at length whether that line should have been in the CLASH (about Simmons becoming Lex's "driver"). The HAVOC buildup will be a continued series of vignettes to humanize Simmons as a role model for all, not just blacks.

THE MYSTERY: WCW reportedly will attempt to build a mystery around why Barry Windham will be on the heel team in the HAVOC "Chamber of Horrors" match. We're told the chamber will not include a maze but will be a complicated cage with assorted traps and shackles.

AS FOR STARRCADE: Most folks are in the dark as to who the followup opponent for Lex Luger will be after HALLOWEEN HAVOC. Some thought is being given to be grooming Tom Zenk for the role after his series of special ref stints in Luger/Hughes vs. Simmons/Windham matches but that's far from certain.

OTHER FEUDS: October shows will include some Enforcers-Freebirds bouts but no one is sure if Michael & Jimmy will do a permanent face turn. Also in October: a series of Sting-Cactus Jack, Sting-Abdullah and Rick Steiner-Abdullah events.

HAMMER TIME: Van Hammer will not likely appear on TV again for several weeks, much in the same fashion as Oz. Talk is he needs more work in Jody Hamilton's gym. At least some in and out of WCW are puzzled why Terry Taylor had to be the sacrificial lamb for Hammer's bow in 1:10 when others were available.

MIDWEST MUSINGS: Flair-Piper is being billed for Dec. 7 in Omaha but we're told that could change. Interesting note: WCW has the Omni booked for Oct. 12 and Titan the next night. You don't think Vince would call Hogan in early, do you?

NETWORKING: WWF has moved SUPERSTARS to ABC affiliate WHBQ Sundays at 2 in Memphis, first time in years. Ch. 13 has aired a mat show. That means WLMT (Ch. 30) now gets CHALLENGE Saturdays at 10 a.m. In the July ratings, SUPERSTARS was the highest-rated show in any time period for the Memphis/Jackson station. WCW has now placed WCW PRO on KSHB (Ch. 41, Fox affil) in Kansas City with Bob Geigel doing the promos.

LAWLER MATCHES FLAIR & RACE: To no one's surprise, Jerry Lawler regained the USWA "world" title Labor Day in Memphis from the Dragonmaster. Counting his original AWA world title, that gives The King seven "world" title reigns.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: This past Monday night, Lawler teamed with Tony Anthony against Eric Embry and P.Y. Chu Hi (Phil Hickerson). On WMC Saturday, Embry referred to the wars between himself and P.Y. which led to World Class becoming USWA.

MORE WRESTLEFEST: That's what they called Monday night's USWA show. Also on the card: Billy Joe Travis vs. M.C. Slammer; Miss Texas vs. Vicious Vicki; Bill Dundee vs. Bull Pain; Dutch Mantel vs. Dragonmaster; Jimmy Valiant/Koko B. Ware vs. Awesome Kong/Bruiser; and a USWA tag title bout with Jeff Jarrett/Robert Fuller vs. PYTs.

JESSE'S VISIT: Jesse Ventura in Atlanta Sunday for the Vikings-Falcons game. We'll review his new GRUDGE MATCH series, which premiered last weekend, in next week's MATWATCH.

FRIDAY IN DALLAS: An estimated 700 turned out for the GLOBAL MAJOR LEAGUE tapings. Bad News and Soultaker teamed as Bad Attitude but lost a clean fall in a Global tag title match to Chris Walker and Steve Simpson when Steve pinned Soultaker.

PATRIOT STILL TOPS: The Patriot (Del Wilkes) retained the North American belt in a defense against Bad News when Soultaker ran in for the DQ.

AT LEAST IT'S FUN: A gag left in for the weekend of Sept. 21: Scott Hudson keeps asking members of the Cartel who The Boss is. Rip Rogers answers: "Dave wants to know, Steve wants to know, Wade wants to know." Hudson: "Who? Who?"

NO MORE LOVE: Chris Love was already out of GLOBAL and Randy Rhodes and Eric Fontaine (PYTs) are, too. Rhodes no-showed GWF Friday showed, but appeared on Memphis TV Saturday.

SUNDAY IN ATLANTA: The Patriot-Stan Lane match headlining Global Sunday night at the Cobb County Civic Center will be for the TV title. Also skedded: Terry Gordy vs. Axis (Bill Eadie) as part of an 11-bout card.

AN UP NOTE: The commentary by Ross & Paul E. Saturday on WCW was some of their most focused and coherent in months and the CONTROL CENTER was probably the best Paul has ever done.

SUNCOAST TAG TOURNEY: SUNCOAST PRO will have a four-team tourney Sept. 28 to determine Florida tag champions. It will be taped for TV.

RADIO NOTES: Looking forward to guesting with Rick Carter on his WRESTLING TALK in Las Vegas Saturday night. And I'll be on for the full 2 hours with Larry Katz on WCAO-AM Baltimore Sunday. This past Sunday, Jim Ross featured open phones on WSB, as did Katz.

NO AXL: Axl Rotten is booked on no WCW October shows, so if he comes in, it won't be until at least November. One WCW source tells me Axl's deal is not firmly set.

RESEARCH CONTINUES: Data is expected back soon from Price-Waterhouse, the consulting firm researching the current makeup of WCW---everything from personalities to the executive structure. I wouldn't expect any major shakeups until that feedback is studied.

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RATINGS RAP

STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 2)

Not Much to Tell

WME WINS WEEK WITH ONE FOE

In a week with only two cable wrestling shows airing, WCW MAIN EVENT took Nielsen honors for the period ending Sept. 1.

WME scored a 2.4 rating and 5.6 per cent share of audience Sept. 1, down 14% from its year-ago 2.8 and strong 7.2 share. The only other show airing, WCW POWER HOUR, rose 8% over its previous airing to a 1.4.

Both WWF/USA shows were pre-empted by coverage of the U.S. Open tennis tourney, as each was the same weekend last year and WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING was bumped for SEC football.

The CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS XVI rating will be included in next week's total figures.

CABLE

Week Ending Sept. 1	Rating/Share	Total Homes	Year Ago
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 9/1)	2.4/5.6	1.4 million	2.8/7.2
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 8/31)	1.4/6.2	815,000	1.4/2.8
WCW WORLD CHAMP. (TBS)	Pre-Empted		2.8/7.2

VIDIOTS (From Page 6)

with fire." 4. Michael St. John, WMC: "...fight fire with fire." 5. Diamond Dallas Page, WCW PRO: "...all she wrote."

BEST PICTURES - 1. CLASH XVI, Sting hiptossing Cactus Jack onto floor. 2. CLASH XVI, Cactus hiptossing Sting. 3. CLASH XVI, Skycam shots of battle royal. 4. CLASH XVI, Cam work of Simmons-Luger dressing room angle. 5. GLOBAL/ESPN, Gordy power-bombing Cactus on floor. 6. CLASH XVI, Bobby Eaton taking huge bump on runway. 7. CLASH XVI, Pillman suplexed by Bradstreet outside on apron. 8. CLASH XVI, Gary Cappetta dancing. 9. CLASH XVI, Zenk cross bodyblock onto Austin on runway. 10. LPWA, Reggie Bennett-Lady X brawl. 11. GRUDGE MATCH, Pie and jello fight.

DREADED GLITCH AWARDS - 1. WCW, for continued spelling of Warner Robins GA with two "Bs." 2. WMC, Cutting to shot of Bill Dundee entrance while tape/audio of his MSC match still going on. 3. WMC, Bad camera take gives tour of studio. 4. WORLD WIDE, Nikita Koloff still listed #5 in top 10.

BLOOPER AWARD - 1. Anthony, GLOBAL, on Patriot comeback: "He's like a man REPOSSESSED." 2. Gordon Solie, WCW PRO: "We'll be back with more in a moment on WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING."

300 AWARDS - 1. Luger, CLASH XVI, for starting the old racial stuff about Simmons being his "driver." I'm told this is to be the only racial remark of this program. Let's hope so. 2. Page, WCW PRO: actually a triple boo for 3 of the usual.

MATWATCHING (From Page 7)

TAMPA TALK: A CWF card in Tampa drew 200 Saturday night. Topliner: Jim Backlund d. Jerry Lynn to retain his "world" light heavyweight championship.

This is not an exercise in blowhard introspection. In my view, however, it is somewhat cleansing for us to, as I suggested last week, put ourselves in proper perspective as both writers and opinionated readers. Disciplined criticism will always be healthy. Without it, we'd be in the clutches of an Iron Curtainesque society, a kind which has taken decades to crumble in the Soviet Union. But let's be honest.

Wrestling is not the cure-all and end-all of the world. It is light entertainment thinly masked as sport. My exposure to the inside of this industry has shown me performers who, unfortunately, believe their own fictional images. It's a pity because they, too, lose perspective on themselves. However, we who write as editors or readers are not the unblemished authorities we'd all like to think we are. We're just people who follow a genre of entertainment which has changed dramatically in the last decade. Just as our fathers had trouble adapting to long hair and sideburns in the 1960s, many of us have difficulty accepting that part of our heritage is likely lost and gone forever. But we still put our shoes and socks on the same way as other folks. And life is going to go on. Next week, I'll have one final self-examination.

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